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19 March 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Chief, DFD-DD/R

SUBJECT : Definition of Responsibility of CIA with
regard to National Reconnaissance Program
and the NRO

1. In a memorandum dated 12 March 1962 from R. D. Curtin, Brigadier General, USAF - Director, Office of Space Systems, USAF, to the Chief, Special Activities Office, Defense Intelligence Agency, a copy of which was directed to me, General Curtin indicated:

"In regard to security procedures, the DIA (SAO) and all other DOD [redacted] will administer the NRP project security using the [redacted] under NRO control. [redacted] implementation details are being worked out and will be discussed at an early date."

2. The [redacted] was designed by this staff to codify the security procedures which had evolved since the inception of the U-2 program and which security procedures were later applied to the CORONA, ARGON, and OXCART programs. The enabling memorandum to select members of the U. S. Defense and Intelligence Community, signed by General Cabell on 20 December 1961 pointed out that the System applied to Projects IDEALIST, CORONA, and ARGON and indicated that the procedures pertained to "certain intelligence collection programs for which the Central Intelligence Agency has security responsibility."

3. Since December 1961 action has been taken to implement the [redacted] and the writer, in his capacity as [redacted] CIA, has accepted the responsibility to "administer the security of the [redacted] as provided in the Manual."

4. It is understood that during the past several months discussions have occurred between CIA and Defense officials with regard to the establishment of a National Reconnaissance Office - a joint CIA/USAF concept. I have been given the impression periodically that the USAF had in mind utilizing [redacted] operational security umbrella to house all reconnaissance projects within the purview of this evolving NRO.

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25X1 I have consistently taken the position that until I was directed by higher authority within CIA, I would not enter into detailed discussions with regard to the feasibility of incorporating several Air Force programs into [redacted] I pointed out that I am not cleared for these Air Force programs, am not aware of their nature and scope and could not discuss the matter intelligently, nor would I desire to discuss the matter with the Director of Security (concerning the probable considerable increase in CIA Security support required) without the approval of the DD/P (now DD/R).

25X1 5. General Curtin's memorandum (which was not coordinated with CIA) implies the WFO is a going concern, presumably with joint CIA participation since the [redacted] is being publicized as the vehicle for administering WWP project security. I do not believe we can permit this memorandum to go unchallenged and should immediately query General Curtin as to his intent here. I would appreciate your guidance in this regard.

[redacted]
Chief, Security Branch
DPD-DD/R

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